

EDITOR'S MISCELLANY



CHICAGO HOSPITAL SCHOOL

A MOVEMENT of much interest to educators and physicians is the founding of a new school in Chicago, known as the Chicago Hospital School. The school is designed to meet the needs of slightly defective children and those prevented by physical ailments—nervousness, sickness, slight defects of hearing, speech, etc.—from studying with ordinary children. Such a school is greatly needed, as there has never been sufficient provision for the education of this class of children.

One department in particular of the work undertaken by the school is expected to be of great scientific value. That is, the experimental study of the psychology of abnormal and sub-normal minds. This work is carried on under the supervision of the University of Chicago, and the medical work under Rush Medical College, with which the school is affiliated. A very thorough system of tests, measurements, and examinations is followed, and daily records are kept by each teacher and nurse of the progress of each case brought into the school. Many prominent physicians think that these studies will add much to the knowledge of the proper treatment of such children and to psychiatry of abnormal psychology. No such thorough study along these lines is being carried on elsewhere, and the University of Chicago is the first university to recognize the value of having such a school associated with it and working in connection with its departments of psychology and pedagogy.

The physicians and teachers interested expect to see the school grow rapidly, as there is a large field for its work. Among the features added is a training-school for nurses and teachers for this particular class of children.

[We hope that this training-school for nurses is in the nature of a post-graduate course for regularly trained graduates of a general hospital, as it would be a grave mistake to "train" nurses in such a specialty alone; it should be added to a previous general training.—Ed.]

The founder and head of the school is Miss Mary Campbell, a former student at the university. The chief of the school's medical staff is Dr. Nicholas Senn, of Chicago.—*Charities of July 6.*

THE English Committee of the Distress Fund for South African Women and Children has published the report made to it by Miss Emily Hobhouse, who went to Africa for the purpose of examining the camps of women and children there.

It may not be generally known that for some time past a form of the same horrible system which became notorious in this country during the Spanish-American War as the "reconcentration" practised by Weyler in Cuba has been established under military supervision in South Africa; namely, that the women and children taken from their homes are concentrated in huge camps, where they necessarily undergo every form of suffering.

It was generally supposed that only a monster like Weyler, who was seldom called anything but "butcher" in American papers, could perpetrate such a system. What must we think when we hear of the same cruelties in South Africa, with no voice raised in protest save of a few isolated civilians?

The extracts from Miss Hobhouse's report, as given in the *Nursing Record*, fill one with horror and aversion.

But something more than the "system" is to be blamed. Behind every system are persons, and those persons are responsible. Back of it all stands the responsibility of the mother and the educator. When will all mothers teach their boys tenderness for the weak and suffering? When will women as a whole cease adoring brute force and learn to love a nobler ideal?

How ridiculous to persist in the delusion that war can ennoble the character, and that the "soldiers of civilization" do not war upon women and children. We counsel all who still cling to the romantic ideals of the Middle Ages to send for Miss Hobhouse's report and read it carefully.

SEVERAL inquiries having been made regarding the work of "The Consumers' League," we are asked to say that the national secretary, Mrs. Florence Kelley, Charities Building, 105 East Twenty-second Street, New York City, will at any time send information, leaflets, reports, or will answer questions addressed to her.

In a former issue a correspondent drew attention to the widening circle of the nurse's work and the demands made upon her to take up related but not strictly professional interests. Mrs. Henry Gold Danforth, in her recent talk to the Rochester City Hospital graduates, voiced the same idea. In speaking of what she calls "Nursing Citizenship" she says:

"Our citizenship is our relation to the world of men and things around us, our value as members of the community, and in doing community work not our immediate individual task. At first sight, perhaps, it may seem as though of all professions that of nursing were most, by its nature, excluded from outside affairs. In its beginnings it may have been so, though even if the influence of the village neighbor who had the knack for nursing were studied, perhaps it would be found to have gone far beyond the four walls that saw its exercise; but with the change of methods, with the new knowledge of the nature, means of propagation, and means of prevention of disease, and its proper care, every nurse who goes out from a training-school becomes an educator in these matters for just those portions of the public who do not read medical journals and who skip the contemporary reviews. More and more on every side trained service is being called for in public stations where such a thing was unthought of but a little while ago, and this demand will increase in proportion as the women who are called on to meet it prove by their personal adaptation and worth the value of intelligent skill."

RECOGNIZING the new importance which mosquitoes have recently assumed in the eyes of scientists and sanitarians, and that the general public is fast coming to recognize the fact that these insects, formerly regarded as mere excuses for displays of more or less irritable humor, are now viewed as dangerous enemies, the Division of Entomology of the Department of Agriculture has issued a monograph which will be of much assistance in the campaign now beginning against the little creatures in many places. The use of screens over windows and beds is advised as the best means of protection against mosquitoes and the diseases of which they are the carriers, but more energetic measures, tending towards the extermination of the tribe, at least in restricted areas, are earnestly

recommended. The burning of cones, made of moistened pyrethrum powder, gives great relief from the attacks of mosquitoes in a room, but it does not kill the insects, and is only a palliative. Mosquitoes found on the ceiling of a bedroom may be killed easily and quickly, it is said, by placing under them a shallow tin vessel nailed to the end of a stick and moistened on the inside with kerosene. But the most satisfactory means of fighting mosquitoes is to destroy their larvæ or abolish their breeding-places by draining ponds and marshes, by stocking pools with fish, and by the use of kerosene on the surface of the water. Approximately, an ounce of the oil to every fifteen square feet of surface is sufficient, and generally the application need be made only once a month. The departmental scientist doubts, however, that this treatment can be effectually applied to salt marshes of large extent. He notes, however, that there need be no hesitation in covering with oil the surface of water used for drinking, so long as the supply is drawn from the bottom of the tank or pond, and a considerable amount of water is always left behind. The only way to free a district of mosquitoes is by concerted action by everybody living in it. For one man to attack the insects on his own land does little good if his neighbors permit the supply to be kept up.

MISS FLORENCE D. FULLER, 110 St. Felix Street, Brooklyn, writes to us concerning the too Bohemian existence of many nurses, and is desirous of starting a club-house for nurses in Brooklyn. Her idea is excellent, and no doubt she will be interested in the mention of the Nurses' Settlement in the foreign news. We are disposed to think that nurses are working out this matter of comfortable and civilized living pretty well for themselves, and that, in fact, no one can do it but themselves. We see a vast difference in the last seventeen years between the forlorn and even squalid "hall room" occupied by the private-duty nurse, where she washed her handkerchiefs in one corner and boiled chocolate in another, and the charming flats of to-day, where four or six nurses have their cosy little home, or the club-houses of New York, Baltimore, and Chicago, with comfortable rooms and a well-kept table.

The one complete failure of a club-house that we know of was one where the management was attempted by a board of philanthropic ladies, with the result that the nurses lost all the money they had invested, and have apparently no prospect of ever being recouped:

"It's so easy to fall into that rather Bohemian existence which does not tend towards the building of character or towards the gracious repose of manner so essential to the success of a nurse. I have noticed more than one ambitious girl, starting out with high ideals and hopes of attainment, drop to the level of mediocrity. I have interpreted this as the result of not having the stimulant of cultivated home life. Freed from long hours of arduous confinement, often accompanied by great anxiety, a restlessness ensues, making every approaching footstep a possible call to again start forth and accommodate herself to the ways of strangers. To help overcome this, she travels about somewhat independently, acquiring a manner not always acceptable in the sick-room, and thereby lessening her chances of professional success.

"It is right to seek diversion. The constant demand upon mental and physical resources makes it imperative she should devote the hours of relaxation to such recreation as will repair her depletion of mind and body. But how shall she cultivate the gracious feminine qualities which she sometimes shows danger of losing through contact with the stern realities of her professional duties when

her home life gives little more than the necessities of meagre existence? She is unable to make for herself the kind of home she ought to have,—not because she is not capable, but because she must be free. Why may we not hand together and have a residential club-house, and employ a competent head to manage it for us?

"I hope some friendly voice will be raised at the coming Congress which will incite more interest in developing the home life for nurses."

IN answer to our inquiry Dr. Flexner, formerly of the Johns Hopkins Hospital and now at the University of Pennsylvania, writes us as follows:

"Much interest has been aroused within the past few weeks on account of the establishment by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, of New York, of an Institute for Medical Research, which is to bear his name. The endowment of the institute is for the present placed at two hundred thousand dollars, this sum to be expended, not for buildings or equipment, but for the support of research in medicine. The plan adopted is to utilize several laboratories already established in connection with a number of the leading medical schools for the conduct of the investigations. The institutions which have received grants from this fund include Columbia, John Hopkins, University of Pennsylvania, University of Michigan, and McGill University. Hitherto there has been a deficiency of productivity in the American laboratories designed for carrying on research in medical science chiefly on account of the limitation of funds with which they have had to contend. In this country, where the support of educational institutions is left to private inclination and benefaction, great difficulties have been encountered in providing adequately out of the slender means placed at their disposal.

"Hence it is that the European laboratories, maintained through national or municipal support, have contributed much more largely to the promotion of medical science. It is therefore a matter of congratulation that so large a gift is available for immediate use in promoting American research in medicine, and the future has been rendered more hopeful by the possibility of the eventual establishment by Mr. Rockefeller of an institute to rank with the Pasteur Institute, of Paris, and the Koch Institute, of Berlin, to be devoted exclusively to the extension of knowledge in scientific medicine."

A LETTER ON TEACHERS' COURSE

DEAR EDITOR: To those who contemplate taking the course in hospital economics at Teachers' College a word from one who has recently completed the course may be of interest.

The name "Hospital Economics" is in a measure misleading. One naturally infers that the instruction given is especially intended to fit nurses for the position of hospital superintendent, while in reality the object seems to be to teach superintendents of training-schools for nurses how to teach; to give a more thorough knowledge of those branches which are only superficially taught in training-schools; to broaden the mind and to give a deeper interest and keener appreciation of what is going on outside the little world in which the life of a nurse is necessarily spent.

To the writer the classes in physiology, methods of teaching, and bacteriology are worth her work, but at the beginning of the year so much time

was given to the courses in domestic science and psychology that seemed to have no direct bearing upon our professional work that it was to a certain extent disappointing.

While the course in domestic science is very fine, nurses who wish to fit themselves for diet-school teaching would save time and money by taking a course in a regular cooking-school.

The lectures on hospital management and the visits to the different hospitals in New York were most interesting. In no other city in the country can there be seen such a number of hospitals with an equipment representing every degree of economy and wealth, and while executive ability and business qualifications cannot be taught theoretically, this department of the course is of especial value to the woman who hopes to become a hospital superintendent.

It may save much disappointment if it is understood that this is not as yet a special course; the nurses become members of the regular classes, composed principally of women who are preparing to teach and of teachers who are taking special courses.

To the woman who has been engaged in practical nursing for a number of years this seems at first rather formidable, but any nurse of good general education who is fairly well read soon acquires the "study habit," and will be able to compete favorably with the other members of the class. Those branches which have direct bearing on her professional work are taken by her with greater ease than by the average woman.

There are many changes and improvements necessary before the course will be entirely satisfactory. The teaching of nurses is so different from the ordinary teaching of school-children that until the course can be made a special one it will necessarily cause some disappointment, but in order to make this special course a recognized department of Teachers' College a sum of money must be raised.

It would seem somewhat unjust that this course should depend on the Superintendents' Society alone for its support. It properly belongs to the nursing profession at large to give it such financial support as shall secure to the training-schools of the future superintendents who are thoroughly qualified to teach and administer.

Is it too much to ask that the thirty thousand nurses in the United States should endow the chair in hospital economics at Teachers' College, the actual cost to each being only \$1.66⅔?

IDA R. PALMER,
Graduate Newport Hospital, 1891.

Miss Palmer's letter should be read in connection with the appeal for the Teachers' College Course in the Education Department. Her suggestion is a good one, and should interest many nurses, though we doubt much that thirty thousand will ever respond to it, or, indeed, to any one thing.

One might say that the distinction she draws in her comment on the name "Hospital Economics" is in reality not much of a difference, and many educators would not agree to her assumption of the comparative uselessness of psychology, the study of which should lay the basis of all successful teaching methods by giving insight into the minds and personalities of others. This sympathetic insight is distinctly not cultivated by the somewhat military routine and disciplinarianism so necessary in much of our work. Perhaps it could be gained in some other way, and much of psychology does sound queer, not to say weird.